

THE
COMMEN=
DATION
OF

Matrimony, made by Cor
nelius Agrippa, & trans
lated into englyshe by
David Elapam.

1534

TO THE RIGHT
VVORSHIPFUL AND HIS

speciall good maister, mayster Grego-
ry Cromwell, some to the ryght ho-
norable lord Cromwell lord
pryncie seale, David Lynam
sendeth gretynge.



HE VEHEMENT
affectiō that I haue
to you , impellyth
me often tymes to
deuise with my selfe
what plesure or ser-
uice my synplenesse myght do, ac-
ceptable vnto your moste gentylle
goodnes. But whan I consydzed
my small abilitie and your greate
diligence towarde wysedome & ex-
cellent good qualities, that apper-
teyne to your astate, I was in ma-
ner cleane discoraged to attempte
any thynge to presente vnto your
maistershypp. Neuerthelesse whan
A.ii. I

THE PREFACE.

I agayne remembred your greate goodnesse, and mooste gentyll familyartye shewed to me in youre yonge age, whiche by outwarde sygnes appereth stablysshed nowe in your mooste gentyll harte, I am encouraged to wyte some thyng, to be a testimony of the loue & affection that I beare vnto you. And amonge many other I choase out to translate this lytel treatise, The commendation of Matrimonye, that you beinge coupled in marriage so so noble, so good, and soo-
bertuous a lady, & leadyng your lyues in suche honeste and chaste wyse (whiche thyng ouer manye nowe adayes neglecte, lyttell regarding this holy and honorable sacrament) maye clerely perceyue your selues in the same greatly commended and praysed. And o-
ther,

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ther, that haue not this holy band of wedlocke in so great veneratiō and honoure, as you haue, shall take occasion, partely at your example, and partely of this Declaration, to repent, that they haue transgressed ageynst so hyghe and so holy a sacrament, to the greate ieopardy of theyr soules. For the apostell sayth: God shall iuge fornicatours and aduouterers. And, The breakers of wedlocke shall not inheryte the kyngedome of god. wherfore I thought that this lyttell queire shulde do moche good, to perswade suche as are wedlocke breakers, to leade their lyues vertuously within the bondes of this holy sacrament, accordynge to the apostels saying: Let wedlocke be kept honozable in al poyntes, and let the chamber be vndefyled. And
as

1. Cor. 6

Gala. 5.
Ephc. 5.

Hebre. 13.

THE PREFACE.

as I supposed, that this treatyse
set forth in englyshe wold do moch
good, with the witty argumentes,
quycke reasons, and weighty au-
thorities therin conteyned: So I
verily thynke, it shall no lesse far-
ther, to dedycate the same to you,
that are a very true parrone of ho-
nest life in wedlock. wherto shuld
I speake of your vertuous educa-
tiō, for the which your right hono-
rable father my good lord, hath be-
hery diligent: And surely his care
in that behalfe hath not ben onely
for you, but for manye other: yea
the thing that he specialy wisheth
and desyeth is, that the youthe of
this hole realme of Englād shulde
be brought up vertuousely, name-
ly the noble mens chylde, in good
litterature, & the other after theyr
abilities, wyttes, and aptenes, in
sciences

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sciences and craftes, wherby they
shall highly profite them selues, to
the great aduancement of the com-
mon weale, and aboute al thinges,
he wolde, that with theyr lernyng
of good letters, sciences, and craft-
tes, they shuld be earnestly taught,
obedyence to god, to the kynges
hyghnesse, and to suche rulers and
lawes, as his maiesty shal ordeyn.

In whiche good mynde, that he
beareth to the common welth

almighty god longe pre-

serue hym, and sende

you bothe moche

welthe and

prof-

perytie. Amen.

FINIS.

THE PRAYSE of matrimony.



THE SACRAMENT of matrimony, being most ancient, and fyrst after that man was made, euen at the begynnyng of all thynges, was ordeyned and commanded of god, and was honowred, and hadde alwayes in hyghe veneration and reuerence, with people of all nations, sanctified and halowed with religion, establyshed by lawes, adurned with miracles and wōders. The whiche sacrament trewely is moze excellent, then other mysteries and lawes, in that it was ordeyned before them, ordeyned I say, not of the imagination and
B uention

Gen. i.

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uention of men, but of god, pynce
of all, euen from the fyfte begyn-
nyng of the worlde, befoze any
synne, in the tyme of innocency, for
the lauful offyce and propagation
of mankynde. All other pceptes,
commaundementes, and myste-
ries, that after the fal of man cam
forth for the reparation, safegard,
remedy, correction, and punishme-
nt, were scasey admytted of a
fewe, when this sacrament of ma-
trimony, through all partes of the
worlde, and by the consente of all
men, was receiued and taken. And
farther it was no lesse strengthened
and maynteyned with the power
of god, then it was by his good-
nes and wysedome ordeyned. For
god the maker of al thynges, wold
this most holy bonde so to be knit
with indissoluble glewe, and perse-
uer,

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uer, that the husbände in his wife,
and the wife in her husband, shuld
alwayes bothe lyue and abyde, as
a bone of bones, & fleshe of fleshe.
For this was the fyyst commaun-
dement of god, institutyng ma-
trimony: The man shall forsake
his father and mother, and shall
cleaue vnto his wife, and they shal
be two in oone fleshe. Whiche
thyng we rede not only in the old
testamente, but the selfe same is
confyrmèd in the gospel, that by
no diuersitie of maners, by no sa-
cietie or lothsomnes, not for age,
barenes, or syckenes, nor for pe-
stilence, leproy, or any other conta-
giouse disease, and briefely for no
cryme of heresy, nor by any mans
power, that sacrament at any time
ought to be broken. When Christ

Gen. 2.

B. ii.

myghty

P R A Y S E O F

Matth. 16.

Marc. 20.

myghtye power of god hath ones
 ioynd together, noo power shall
 presume to separate. Noz it can be
 lauffull foꝛ any cause, the wyfe to
 forsake her husbonde, oꝛ the hus-
 bonde his wyfe, bycause it is lau-
 full foꝛ no manne to departe from
 him selfe, noz no man to leaue him
 selfe. Foꝛ she whiche is made of a
 mannes rybbe, of fleshe, the same
 fleshe, and the same bone of bones
 foꝛ an helpe vnto the man : God
 neuer wold her to be seperate from
 the man, but foꝛ fornication: whi-
 che one onely cause, God dyd ex-
 cepte. But if foꝛ any other cause
 the stronge bonde, and vnytie of
 matrimony be loused, yet the per-
 sones beinge separate, be and re-
 mayne manne and wyfe, noz they
 with whom they be coupled after
 theyꝝ deuorſe, can be excused from
 aduoutry.

MATRIMONY.

aduoutry. And therfore Chꝛist ad-
deth, sayinge: He that after his
wife is dimissed foꝛ aduoutry, ma-
ryeth an other woman, commyt-
teth aduoutry: and he that dothe
mary her that is so letten go, is an
aduouter. Nowe to what ende
and vse this reuerende and moste
woꝛthy sacrament was comaun-
ded, we wyll declare. It was or-
dained foꝛ an helpe, foꝛ propaga-
tion, and to auoyde fornication.

Matt. 16.

¶ The fyꝛst cause is taken, where
god dydde institute this holy my-
sterie vnder these woꝛdes: It is
not good a man to be alone, let vs
make foꝛ hym an helper lyke hym
selfe. Foꝛ man sythens he is a cre-
ature mooste accompenable, then
trewely and well shal vse the office
and duety of a man, and shall pre-
pare a trusty keper of his lyfe and

Gen. 1.

B.iii.

goodes

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goodes, when he entrech into the
 stedfast and indissoluble felow-
 shipp of matrimony. And therefore
 bothe to men that be somewhat a-
 ged yea and to those that be decre-
 pite, and in who there is no might
 of generation, no hope left of pro-
 pagation, it is neuerlesse lafull
 to mary, and (if a man may say it)
 often tymes necessary, wherby they
 maye passe forth the later dayes
 of theyr lyfe, in the companie of
 theyr well be loued wyfe, with
 more ioye, suertye, and lesse care.
 Wherof Dauid, veryc olde, with
 the Sunamite maide, is an exam-
 ple. For what felowshipp mought
 happen amonge men, more holyc
 and pleasaunte? what more surer?
 what lesse careful, what more chaste
 then the lyfe of manne and wyfe?
 when eyther of theym is the same
 that

3. Reg. 1.

MATRIMONY.

that the other is, in one agreeable mynde two bodyes, in two bodies one mynde and one consent. Only man and wyfe, one enuieyth not another, they alone loue eche other, out of measure, in as moche as eyther of them hole hangeth of the other, and hath quietnes and reste in the other, one flesh, one minde, one con corde, one heuynesse greueth them bothe, one myght equally reioysseth bothe, the verye same and euen lyke wyll is in both, theyr wyynyng is common to both, the same ryches, the same pouerte, like dignitie and worthynes, they be alwayes of one chaumbre, and at one table, they kepe company together, nyght and day, in sleping, no, in wakynge they departe not the one frome the other: but theyr lyfe is conioyned in all actes, labours,

B.iii. bours,

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bours, icoperdyes, and in euery
 chaunce the one serueth the other,
 as longe as they lyue, they kepe
 company together to theyꝝ lyues
 ende, they neuer departe without
 they dye, and the one beinge dead.
 the other canne scante lyue. Soo
 great is wedlockes loue, that v-
 neth death can set a sonder those,
 whom lyfe hath knytte together.
 Suche is the perseuerance of ma-
 trimony, suche is the vnitie, that
 one husoand shuld haue one wife,
 and one wyfe onc husebande. For
 one rybbe at the begynnynge was
 turned in to one wyfe. And there
 shal be saith god, two in one fleshe.
 He sayth not, thꝛee oꝛ mo. And in
 the arch of Noe god commaunded
 no mo women to be pꝛeserued then
 men, that for one man there shuld
 be but one wyfe. For where a man
 hath

Gen. 2.

Gen. 7.

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hath many wyues, oꝛ a womanne
many husbundes: there the vnitie
of matrimony faylethe. Therfoꝛe
her alone that a man hath taken
to his wyfe, the same let hym kepe
without violation of kyndenesse,
to the last ende of his lyfe in a per-
fecte loue and continuall remem-
brance. Let the father gyue place,
the mother gyue place, the chyl-
dren, the bꝛothers and systers, let
al the heape of frendes gyue place
to the swete beneuolēce and entier
loue of man and wife, and that foꝛ
great skyl. Foꝛ the father, mother,
chyliden, bꝛethern, systers, kyns-
folke, be the frendes of nature, and
woꝛkes of foꝛtune: man and wyfe
be the mistery of god. And the man
had a wyfe, & the wyfe a husband,
befoꝛe father, mother, bꝛother, oꝛ
chyliden. And therfoꝛe it was com

Gen. 2.

B. v. maunded

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maunded to the man, to leaue father and mother, sisters, brethren, and chyldren, and cleaue to his wyfe, that aboue all other thynges he shuld kepe to his liues end that thyng, whiche was fyrste of all gyuen vnto hym: nor that one of them shuld at any tyme be without the other, of whome the one was not made without the other. Wherfoze the chyldren to departe from theyr parentes, and the parentes to leaue theyr chyldren, no lawe forbyddeth, sometyme necessitie compelleth, profyte styreth, consideratiō moueth, the chyldren often tymes be dymysed from auctoritie of theyr parentes, they ofte chalenge to them selfe lybertie by religion, often tymes in straunge countreys they get theyr luyng, & in other places seke theyr dwellinge

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lynge: but the wyfe from her hus-
bande, or the husbande from his
wyfe, no lawe, no necessitie, no pro-
fyte, no consideration, no deuorse,
no religion, no licence, no absence,
dothe permytte to departe. For
whiche of theym, that leaueth or
neglecteth to kepe company toge-
ther, the same as forsaken, and so-
litary alone, must of necessitie lede
a lyfe moste wretched, destitute of
all gladnesse and helpe, bycause
the helpe that was made for hym
of god, and the companion of ioye
and gladnes to hym gyuen, he ne-
glectynge deppseth to take, or con-
temptuously is bolde to leaue and
forsake.

The seconde cause of matrimo-
ny, we shewed to be for propaga-
tion of chyldren, as it is red, where
god blessed Adam and Eue, say-
unge:

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Gen. 1.

Gen. 9.

Gen. 13.
15. 18.

inge: Encrease, and multiply, and
replenyshe the earthe. which bles-
syng after the floudde, was euen
freshe agayn renewed by the same
woꝝdes. The effect wherof is, that
man shulde render to nature, that
he had boꝝowed of her, and to the
image of god, shulde byynge forth
and nouryshe chyldeꝝ lyke hym
selfe, and restore the comon felow-
shyp of mankinde with a certayne
successiō, and to kepe it perpetual.
which blessinge he that dyd not re-
garde, in the old lawe, was coun-
ted of all men cursed and most vn-
happy, as it is wrytten: Cursed is
he, that hath not sede in Israell,
and blessed is he, whose sede is in
Syon. wherupon Abraham for
the meryte of his fayth, was bles-
sed in his generation, and Sara
beinge then olde, and past chylde
bearynge,

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bearynge, dyd put awaye the maledictiō of her barrennes, with this blessing of generation. For in this sacrament it is not the meryste of nature, to conceyue chyliden, but the blessinge of almyghtye God, and a mystery far passyng the merystes of nature. Whiche thynge was not vnknownen to Iacob the Patriarch, the whiche when his wyfe Rachel thought that the accompanienge with her husbände, was to gyue chyliden, said to him, Gyue me chyliden, or elles I am but deade, Iacob answered: Am Gen. 30.
I then in goddes stede, which kepeth the fruite of thy wombe from the: And Isaac made intercession Gen. 25.
to god, for his wyfe, bycause she was bareyn, whiche harde his petition, and made her to conceyue. For they knewe, that the frutes of
matrim

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mattirmony were of god, not of nature. And of this the bastarde children be called naturall: but those that come of mattirmony, be onely laufull. And therfore he is not admitted to holy orders, whose mother is not knytte to his father by laufull copulation in this mooste worthy sacrament of mattirmony, for a bond of perpetual felowship. For a bastarde shall not enter into the churche of god. which bastard also is straytely prohybited, bothe by humayne lawes and constitutions of wyse men, to be the heyre of tempoꝛal landes and goodes. For they haue no laufull heyre, whiche by neglectyng and despising mattirmony, at the wanton and entysynge luste of the fleshe, vnlawfully take theyꝝ congresse. And it is the common sentence and iudgement

Deut. 14.

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ment of lawiers, that he hathe an vncertayne father, and a naughty mother, whiche is not bozne in matrimony. For he is base bozne, and is the sonne of the people, yea rather the sonne of no man, which is the chylde of a woman not laufully maryed. But he is the true heir, and trewe sonne, whose mother, without the infamy of sinne, without the blame of kynsfolke, without the offence of god, to a certayn and well known father, with the dignite of matrimonye, and with fruite certayn is married, and without sclander abydeth by hym continually. Therfore onely matrimony maketh chyldren to be certayne, & giueth vndoubtful heires it maketh honest the couplynge of nature, and for sinne it giueth merite, it increaseth the stocke and family,

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family, it gathereth aliance, it contenteth god, and honoureth hym.

1. Cor. 7.

The thynde vse of matrimony, I sayde to be for to auoyde fornication (the apostel Paul comman dyng): That he that can not conteyne, shulde mary. For matrimony excuseth an incontinent manne from synne, from fornication, fro aduoutry, and from any other vnlawful fleshely desyre. For the whiche cause of auoiding incontinen cy, he dothe commaunde also wydowes to mary agayne, sayinge:

1. Tim. 5.

I wyll therfore that the yonger women mary, beare children, gide theyr house, and gyue no occasion to theyr aduersary to speake euill. For yet the power and worthynes of the matrimony of them, that can not conteyne, is any thyng lesse, though they sometymes couple not

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not moſte conueniently, for without faulte they ioine together, without synne the dūetie is gyuen, though perchaunce the requeſte be immoderate, and not bycauſe to gette chyldren the huſband and the wyfe accompany together. For nowe not onely for felowſhypp, and to brynge forth the chyldren it is ordeyned, but alſo bycauſe the oone ſhulde beare the others fraylnesse, to ſuffer and take ſuperfluous copulation, and to auoyde the vnlaufull. For a mutual ſeruiſe it is commanded, as the Apoſtle ſaith: It is better to mary, then to burn. 1. Cor. 7. And of widowes in an other place he ſayth: Let not them go backe, 1. Tim. 5. bycauſe they can not conteyne, after the temptation of Satan. Yea and ſo it is commaunded, that (ac-
cording to Paules wordes) with
C out

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1. Cor. 7.

out the consent of eyther of theym
that is coupled, the other without
synne, maye not intende to prayer,
if therby it myght chance the other
to be defrauded, or lacke the car-
nall ductie. For (as the Apostle
sayth) the woman hath not power
of her body, but the man: and like
wyse the man hath not power of
his body, but the womanne. So
great is the knotte of this bonde,
that though for incontynency alon-
ly it be taken, yet if one of the cou-
ples afterward wold continually
lyue continently, in no wyse it can
be done, but with the others con-
sent, yea and though bothe do con-
sent, yet it can in no wyse be taken,
that the matrimonye is dissolued.
So he that for cause of byngyng
forth of chyldren maryeth, can not
without synne put away his ba-
ren

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ten wyfe, and mary an other, whet
by he might haue chyliden. which
thyng also as wytnessen Valerius
Marimus, Plutarch, and Dio-
nisiuſ Halicarnasseus, was obsec-
ued and kept amōg the Romans
after the Citie was buylded, fyue
hundreth and twenty yeres, to the
tyme of Spurius Carbilus, whi-
che fyrste of all other preferringe
the desyre to haue chyliden, aboue
his fidelitie in wedlocke, not with-
out his greate blame, forsoke his
wyfe for barennesse. But nowe I
wyll retourne.

God the creator of all thynges,
wolde this molle holy bonde to be
so faste and indyſſoluable, that for
what cause so euer it was ones be-
gonne, by no power or strength, at
any tyme it shoulde be dyſſolued.

He wolde it to be so generall, and
C.ii. through

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throughout al the worlde, so prynced in all mennes myndes, that no man shulde auoyde this mooste holdest mustery, without mooste greuous offence, excepte he wolde vtterly forsake all humanytic. For he the fyrste auctoz of wedlocke, & god before all matrymony (when he wold take on hym the nature of man) wolde his mother fyrste to mary. And though without mans seede he wold be bozne of a virgin, yet he wold not be bozne of her out of wedlocke, but of his mother married, though he not defoyled with man. For he wolde not his mother to be vnmaryed, that by his mothers example, he myghte exhorte vs to the very same.

Therfore what so euer they be that regarde not this mooste auuncient and mooste holy ordinaunce,
as

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as dispisers of goddes and manns lawes, shall be iuged to perpetual fyre, euen lyke the dnye and baren trees. And therfoze in the old law, they that in theyr ype age, did not marry a wyfe, were put forth of the temples, theyr offerynges were reiected, they were counted not worthy to receyue herytages and bequestes, vnworthy of goddes and mannes helpe, whiche despyssynge goddes and mannes lawes, refused to take the helpe ordeyned for them of god, and stablyshed by the lawes of man. Neuerthelesse two kyndes of menne maye be excepte from contracting matrimony, whiche for weakenes of nature, be vterly not apt for it, as they that be colde of nature, bewyched and enchanted, madde personnes, children, feble persons, and suche as

C.iii.

be

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be gelded, and those whiche being
moued with the spirit of god haue
chosen perpetuall chastytie. For
this sort, religion dischargeth fro
the bonde of matrimony: and the
other sorte, by naturall impedym-
ent, is excused. But who so euer
be not of one of those two kyndes,
let them well knowe, that they are
so bounden to contracte matrimo-
ny, that if they leaue it, or not re-
garde it (except they be greatly re-
pentant) they are unworthy of the
kyngedome of god. yet for al that,
no manne shulde be compelled by
force, to contracte matrimony. For
in as moche as this bond is made
by onely consent of loue, it oughte
specially to be free, for loue it selfe,
is at no mannes commandement.
For the gyftes of ryche menne bye
not loue, no dignitie, nor yet nobi-
litie

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litie counteruayleth loue, no thret-
nynges or byolence of great men
of power, can compeill loue, which
god him selfe doth not constraine,
but from the begynnynge created
it free. And there is no loue so ve-
hement, and so stedfast as betwene
the husband and the wyfe. There
is nothyng of greatter force, then
the tender loue of the wife, the whi-
che no disloyaltie corrupteth, noo
misfortune causeth to slyde, noo
strang acquaintance withdraueth,
no age, no processe of tyme consu-
meth. And therfore by the coman-
dement of god, the loue of the wife
shoulde be preferred before father
and mother, childre, brothers and
syphers, kynsfolke, alyaunce, and
all other thynges. Wherfore they
moste greuously offende, what so
euer they be, parentes, nere kyns-

C.iiii. folke,

Gen. 2.
Matth. 19.

P R A Y S E O F

folke, tutours, and gardians, whiche (hauinge no respecte to the continuall beneuolence of the lyfe, to the procreation of chyldren, nor to chastitie, but throughte couetousnesse and ambition that they haue to worldly dignitie, nobyltie, power, ryches, and suche lyke) beyonde all due obedience to parentes by goddes commaundemente (by a certain tyranny) restrain and make bonde (whiche to this sacrament oughte to be gyuen) the free consent of their sonnes and daughters, and compel them to be married to suche as they hate, withoute any consideration of age, loue, condition, maners, and specyally of goddes commaundemente. And hereof at lengeth do ryse betwene man and wyfe, fornication, adultery, debate, raylinge wordes, continuall

M A T R I M O N Y.

tinuall anger, perpetual strife, discorde, hatred, diuorces, and other infinite mischiefes. And also other whyle poysonynge, slaughter, and violent murther cusueth: that it maye be sene, that it was not god but the dyuell, that coupled suche personnes to gether. Tobi. 6.

Furthermore in many places, certayne worldly prynces and lordes of christedome, the enemyes of god, blasphemers of Iesu Christ, defilers of holy thynges, presumptuously takynge vpon them that pertyneth to god, at theyr voluntary wyl, yea and somtime at their expresse commaundement, compel theyr subiectes to mary. purchasynge mozeouer to theyr cofers the dymes of dowryes, not without abominable sacrilege, and so forbearing the aduouterers, they pu-

C. v.

nythe

P R A Y S E O F

Mat. 21.

rythe them that mary, which wicked rulers at the laste the ryghteous iudge wyl destroye.

There is also an other no lesse damnable custome, whiche hath taken place among many nations to speake commonly euyl of them that mary the second time. yea and moreover they cōdemne them that mary agayne in a certayne somme of money, and the same they ley vp for a knotte of good company, to make mery with, and they make Joseph the husbände of the moste blessed vyrgin Mary, the patrone of this so wicked sclander against goddes mysterye. But the dyuell hath found these felowshyps and brotherhed, and the anger of god, hath deliuered them into a reprobued sence, that they reioysynge at adultery, hoedome, and fornications,

Roma. 1.

MATRIMONY.

tions, shulde rayle vppon seconde mariages, as who sayth the grace of god is voyde in such mariages, mockinge that sacrament, to whiche all honour, reuerence, and libertie, is gyuen. But this damnable fasciō must be taken away and plucked cleane out of the dominions of fraunce: for trewely the rulers therof can not in any poynte do more seruice to god, & profit the chrysten common welthe, then to do this, that is to saye, that good thynges maye be taught, and euell thynges maye be banysshed, not onely that pertain to the common societie of men, but also to goddes religion.

Thou therfore, who soo euer thou arte, that wyll take a wyfe, let loue be the cause, not substance of goodes, chose a wyfe, not a garment,

PRAYSE OF

ment, let thy wyfe be maryed vnto the, not her dowrye. With this mynde almighty god beunge thereto called (whiche alone gyueth a trewe wyfe) and the consent of the parentes also required, and dewe obedience shewed vnto them, al couetousnesse, desyre of honour, enuy, and feare, sette a parte, with a temperate deliberation in thy selfe with consent, free and feruent, but reasonable and chaste loue, so take thy wyfe, commytted and gyuen to the for euer by the hand of god, for thy continuall felowshyp, not to seruice and bondage. Whome thou oughteste to rule with thy wisdomie, with all fauour and reuerence. And let not her be subiect vnto the, but let her be with the in all trust and counsaile, & let her be in thy house, not as a dyudge, but
as

MATRIMONY.

as maistresse of the house, in thy
householde not as a mayden, but
a mother, & a bynnger vp of those
children that thou shalt begette of
her, whiche shall be lo:des of thy
goodes, and represent thy name,
to such as shall come after the. And
so thou canste not chose but haue
a good wyfe, and good chyldren,
fo: an euyl wyfe neuer happeneth
but to an euyl husband. Fo: with-
out a wyfe, the name can not con-
tinue, no: the progeny endure, no:
the stock increace, no: a family be,
nother a father of householde na-
med, no: a house called, no: a com-
mon welthe stand, no: any empire
endure. This thyng the buylder
of the Romayne empire ryght well
dyd knowe, whiche (when he lac-
ked wiues fo: his subiectes) made
a sharpe and fierse battayle with
the

PRAYSE OF

the Sabinis, that denyed they
doughters. For he knew very wel,
that his empire coude not conty-
nue, if wyues shuld be awaye. For
seing that a citie standeth of hou-
ses, and the common welth of pry-
uate thynges, and of rulyng of a
housholde, and family, the discy-
plyne to gouerne a common welth
is ordeyned: howe shall he rule a
citie, that hath not lerned to rule a
house: howe shall he gouerne a
common welthe, that neuer knewe
his priuate and familiar busines:
Hereof Socrates testified, that he
lerned morall philosophy more of
wyues, then naturall philosophy,
of Anaxagoras and Archelaus.
For trewely matrimony gyueth a
gret exercise to morall philosophy.
For it hath a certayne householde
common welth annexed, in ruling
the

MATRIMONY.

the whiche a man maye some lerne
and haue experyence of wisedome,
temperaunce, loue to god and his
kynde, and all other vertues, by
which in louyng his wyfe, in byn-
gynge bp his chyldren, in gouer-
nyng his famply, in sauyng his
goodes, in ruling his littel house,
in procreatyng and enlargynge
his stocke, he may leade a life most
happy. Furthermoze to see before
a mannes eyes, his well beloued
wyfe, and by chyldren and succes-
sion, to haue his family and name
extended, is great gladnes and fe-
licitie, it is the swete consolation
of trauayle. He that wanteth a
wyfe, hath noo house, bycause he
hath not setled a house, yea and if
he haue, he taryeth in it as a stran-
ger in his mine. He that hath not a
wyfe, though he be neuer so riche,
hath

PRAYSE OF

hath almoste nothyng that is his,
bycause he hath nothing safe from
deceytes, noꝛ he hath not to whom
he myghte leaue, noꝛ to whom he
myghte truste. He that hath not a
wyfe, lacketh a famylye, lacketh
his nye kynred, and without hope
of succession is alwayes left alone
and forsaken. His seruantes steale
from hym, his felowes brybe from
hym, his neighbours despise him,
his frendes regarde hym not, his
nye kynred begyle him, his bastard
chyldeꝛen if he haue any, be shame
and rebuke to hym, and wytnesse
of his iniquitie, noꝛ he can leaue
bnto the his ryches, noꝛ the name
of his famyly, but as he taryeth in
lyfe without maryage, soo beinge
dead, he perissheth without name,
noꝛ in this lif he deserueth to haue
any beneuolence oꝛ loue, which is
greatest

MATRIMONY.

greatest comforte to man. But as a forsaker of mans nature, worthy of all calamitie, is moste vnfortunate counted of all men, and most worthy to be forsaken. And hereof Lysurgus made a lawe, that who at conuenient tyme did not regard to mary, they in the sommer tyme shoulde be kepte backe from open plaies and sportes, fro al pastime, and mery syghtes: and in the winter, shuld be led bare round about the market place, and vexed with mockes and scoznes, abhored and cried out apon of all men, so that they shulde confesse that they dyd ryghtuously suffer, bycause they despised relygyon, obeyed not the lawes, offended agaynste nature, and as moch as was in them, caused that neyther common welthe, impire, no? religion coulde stande,

D bycause

PRAYSE OF

bycause they had not endeouored
them selues, to begette those, by
whom these thinges shuld be main-
teined and vpholden. Plato in his
lawes ordeyned, he that maryed
not a wyfe shulde be put backe fro
al common office and honour, and
shoulde be onerate with common
charges more greuous then other
citizens were. And Augustus Ce-
sar made a lawe, that yonge men
shulde mary wyues, and increase
the people of Rome. whiche lawe
many other afterward confirmed,
And more ouer granted to be free
from common offyce a yere. and li-
mitted out of the comon treasure
a rewarde to hym that maryed a
wyfe a newe. Aduoutries euerye
where in the old time always were
greuously punysshed with mooste
harpe lawes, bycause that matri-
mony

MATRIMONY.

mony being ones violate, there is not onely wrong done to man, but to god hym self. And hereof in the olde lawe, who so euer with brea-
kyng matrimony, had committed aduoutry, was adiudged to be stoned to death. But he that toke away other mennes goodes, and so committed theft, was punished in foure double and fyue double as moche. For this man vnlauffullye toke awaye mennes goodes, and worldly thynges, the other besides the offence and hurt of his neyghbour, yea being iniuriouse to god, doth dishonest the godly thinges. The Romaine lawes condemne to death aduoutrers, and permit also vnto the husband without any open iugement and without punishment to sle the aduoutrer take, which lyberty is not gyuen to hym

Leuiti. 20.

Deut. 22.

Exod. 22.

D.ii.

that

PRAYSE OF

that hath his father slayne. Also
for a man to see his owne wyfe, it
is punished with sharper deathe,
then to see father or mother, and
worthely. For nature maketh fa-
ther and mother, a wyfe is the mi-
stery of god. & I thinke that he can
not be with sufficient punishment
bered, which was so hardy to see
his helpe, comfozte, and succour,
and his companion to lyue with,
gyuen to hym by god. For he is
cruell vpon the gyfte of god, wic-
ked agaynste the holy, a defyler of
nature, and iniurious to god. And
therfore also the lawes canon for-
beade hym the felowshyp and com-
pany of men, shut hym forth of the
churche, forbade and take awaye
from hym seconde maryages, de-
nye vnto hym the holy sacrament,
iudgyng hym vnworthye of the
foode

MATRIMONY.

foode of god, whiche was not ashamed to offend god, with so outrageous a trespass and mischiefe. But nowe I can not tell by what negligence, and lyttell regarding of iustice & god, the sleers of their wyues, and aduouterers, escape nowe almoste al punishment, and theues yea for a lyttel faute be hanged vp with ropes, except bycause our iudges be gyuen into reposed sense and vnderstandynge, to make the commaundement of god boyde, for the traditions of man. But nowe lette vs conclude, and make an ende.

Roma. 1.
Matt. 15.

Thou therfore who so euer, if thou wylte be a man, if thou wylt not cleane do away man from the, if thou wylt occupie the duetye of manhod before other thynges, if thou wylt be the lawfull sonne of
god

P R A Y S E O F

god, if thou wylt be naturall and
louyng to thy countrey, to thy fa-
mily, to the common welth, if thou
wylt possede and enioye the erthe,
and deserue heuen, it is necessarye
that thou entre the laufull bonde
of matrimony, that thou chose for
continuance a companion to lyue
with, that maye not be separate,
that thou encrease mankinde, and
as the sonne & image of god, thou
procreate chyldren lyke thy selfe.
and that thou wysely and vertu-
ously nouryshe bring vp and go-
uerne them, for the behoufe of the
common welthe, mayntenance of
thy countrey, and the reuerence of
god, whiche gaue them vnto the.
He that dothe these thynges, he is
a man, he that is a manne, must of
necessitie do these thynges, except
he wyl bringe forth by his na-
ture

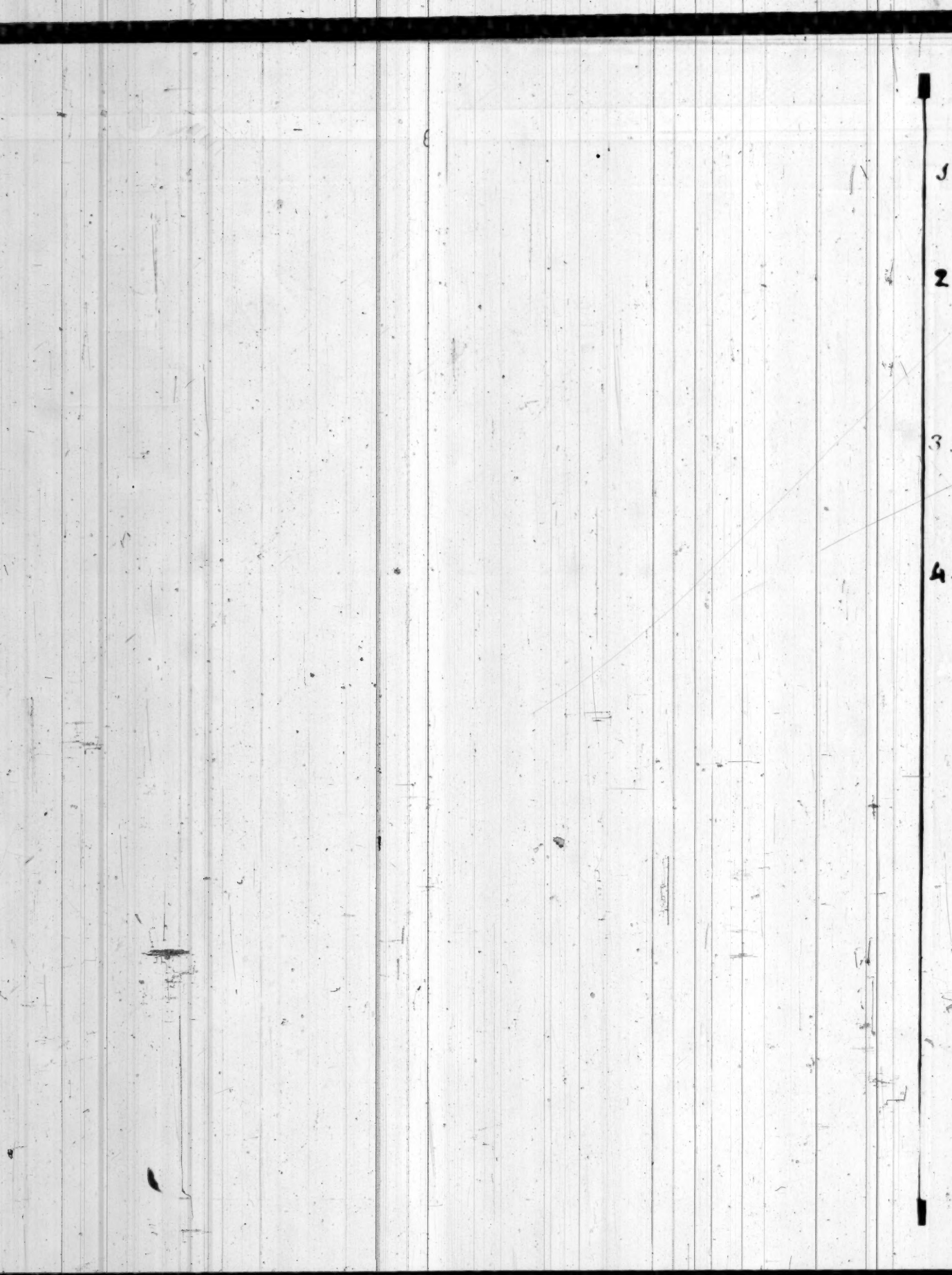
MATRIMONY.

ture so hyndered, some thyng lesse then a mā, and not woꝛthy of man hode, oꝛ elles by clynynge ouer mannes power, wyl chosse some thyng greater then man can do, that is perpetually to kepe a chasteitie angelicall. But who so euer is not of one of these two thinges, and as a negligent person, dothe not regarde trewe matrimony, oꝛ violate the same, with cloked fornication, oꝛ put away frome hym his companion of lyfe, oꝛ flee her, kepe noo company with hym, that he maye be troden downe as reproued of god, and a stranger frō the felowshyp of Christen people.

¶ FINIS.

¶ LONDINI in ædibus Thomæ Berthes
leti typis impress.
Cum priuilegio ad imprimen-
dum solum.

ANNO. M. D. XL.



Obsolete Words in the foregoing Tract.

1. For Man, sythens he is &c, means since, & is spelt different ways; as, sither, sithen, sithin, sithnel, and as above.
2. mooste accompenable. i.e. sociable, fit for company, or conversation. a, very frequent in old authors, being prefix'd to the Adjectives compenable, or, as tis sometimes met with, compinable.
3. uneth Death &c, uneth, unethes, unethis, uneths, for all these are uids; signifies scarcely, hardly. . Anglo Saxon Un-eade. Eith, Easy.
4. the dymes of Gorynes. Perhaps, for I speak by conjecture, this should be read as one Word viz thedymes or thedomes the acquisition of Honours from the Anglo Saxon Dean, to thrive, prosper, acquire &c. So Chaucer He tok me certain golde, I wote it wel
What: Evil thedome on his monk's shoulde.
for so it should be read says Mr Wry i.e
He brought me some Gold, I know very well
how much: a Fox on his Monk's shoul.
Shipman's Tale. page 141. lines 2912, 13.